

(2)

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Dr. Donald F. Hornig
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Washington, D. C. 20506

Dear Don:

May I offer a thought, perhaps unconventional, about NIKE-X, stimulated by this month's Fortune.

I tend to favor it, notwithstanding the arms race implications. I view it as inconsequential against concerted attack from the USSR. But it seems a necessary precaution (1) against "accidental" attack and (2) to prevent a dangerous amplification of the threat from China during a possibly long interval when they have some bombs but not a massive capability. These hazards are the main destabilizers in the present standoff.

But for this to work we need better communications with the Russians. Would we really lose so much if we gave them an anti-ballistic-missile system on a silver platter? In fact this would seem to me a worthwhile quid pro quo for mutual inspection under a system for control of offensive weapons.

I would be foolish to expect a detailed reply, but would be interested whether I am just wasting time with such a comment.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

HORNIG, D.F.